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ABSTRACT

This conference paper reports the development of African and Afro-American Studies in a six institution consortium. Following introductory material, three phases of the project are reviewed: curriculum development and cultural enrichment in the areas of social science and literature, arts and humanities, and life sciences. Additional information concerns faculty and curriculum development, implementation of the project 1972-73, dissemination of project outcomes, and project evaluation 1969-72. A brief summary is included. (MJM)

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The Development of African and Afro-American Studies: A Consortium Approach

by

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This paper was presented at the Fourth Annual Invitational Workshop on African and Afro-American Studies, Bennett College, March 29, 1973.

The widespread establishment of programs in African and Afro-American Studies in colleges and universities towards the end of the 1960's will go down as one of those few innovations that successfully challenged American higher education. Curricular change and development became the focus for highlighting the past, heritage and culture of all peoples of African descent as well as grappling with their places, problems and promises within the context of man-in-society. The result was a plethora of programs, most of which were put together hastily in response to vociferous student demands. The basic issues of rationale, legitimacy, and developmental process of these programs are well known and have been exposed adequately by many on campuses, and in the literature.

The agenda now, in light of fiscal uncertainties in higher education, calls for a hard, reflective, critical, and dispassionate assessment of what has been done to date and what improvements must be made in the interest of ensuring the viability, productivity and survival of African and Afro-American Studies programs. There is need for a vigorous campaign for self-renewal of institutional structures, with their impinging variables. Today's trend and mood in higher education dictate that viable programs will be those that are interdisciplinary, and intercultural, eschewing separatism and forced imposition. It is now generally agreed that more can be done for the undergraduate students if the Black Experience is made a part of their general studies programs. Nevertheless, this and other approaches are very much dependent upon the institution, its outlook and resources.

In developing African and Afro-American Studies programs, many colleges and universities, especially large and public, have done so

unilaterally. On the other hand, where a college especially small and private, was unable to go it alone, it has been possible to pool resources with neighboring institutions. One such cooperative effort at interinstitutional programs in African and Afro-American Studies was that of the Six Institutions' Consortium, the subject of this paper. The member institutions of the Consortium are Barber-Scotia College, Bennett College, Livingstone College, Saint Augustine's College, Shaw University and Winston-Salem State University.

Involving small, four-year institutions, five private and one public, that have common needs and problems, the Consortium's program was established in 1969 to assist these institutions to keep alive their tradition of providing effective education for black youth. In a deliberate effort to produce systematic curricula, the project was designed to span a three-year effort in the development of curriculum, resources — faculty and material — and in cultural enrichment with specific subject matter emphases and general studies during each year. The first phase focused on the Social Sciences and Literature in 1969-70; the second on the Arts and Humanities; and the third on the Life Sciences. Each phase spanned an academic year during which a common pool of resources and facilities were provided to enhance a proper and legitimate accomplishment of the curricular task. Financial support was derived from the U.S. Office of Education under Title III of the 1965 Higher Education Act.

The African and Afro-American Studies Curriculum Project (herein after referred to as the project) offered the six institutions a unique opportunity for a systematic reflection, planning and development of curricular offerings that are academically sound. It provided in-service education as well as advanced study for their faculties. They found that through a deliberate appraisal of their curriculums, and through thoughtful study and careful consideration, involving all the faculty along with student input and reaction, it was possible to equip each institution's project participants with the scope, focus, and desirable outcomes that undergirded the curricular outlines they prepared. This was deemed important in order to ensure that the efforts, time and investment given the project proved beneficial and pertinent to each institution.

There was a recognition that there had to be an attempt towards extending beyond the mere feel of a need for an addition to the curriculum that each institution had, to pursuing a re-ordering of what needed to be in light of contemporary and

emerging circumstances. New curricular patches to an old curriculum will not hold out for long. A new and resolute effort is more realistic. In effect, the outcome of a good Afro-American Studies program lies in an overhaul of the general studies and the liberal arts curriculums. Curricular concepts and foci must be assessed, re-arranged and, in some cases, discarded and modified to provide the most wholesome academic program.

At some of the institutions, a committee or commission of students and faculty was set up to review the curriculum and to recommend changes and ways in which they could be enriched. These established working forums which provided the base for an effective implementation of the project. There was, therefore, an exercise in understanding, and a utilization of the supportive resources that the consortium offered. The project attempted to encourage the sharing of accomplishments by each institution with others. It called for faculty commitment and participation, as well as encouraged student involvement at both the institutional and consortium levels. In effect, what an institutional representative produced was what his institution needed and what it wanted. In a way, working through the consortium served to provide an opportunity for each institution to express more adequately what it considered its distinctive individuality in its curricular offerings. No attempt was made to produce a standardized curriculum for all member institutions. A great deal of importance was placed on the development of faculty, especially since there was a handful of those with competencies in the field of African and Afro-American Studies.

Faculty Development

Faculty development was carried out simultaneously on two fronts. In-service education, through seminars, workshops utilizing many expert resources, was provided for faculties of member institutions. These sessions were also open to students and the public. Special additional sessions with consultants were held for faculty program participants, who also had to carry out the study and research, requisite for developing course outlines and instructional materials. These participants were released by National Teaching Fellows, which enabled them to devote most of their time to the curriculum and material development task. Each member institution was awarded three fellowships every year beginning in 1969-70. In order to ensure breadth

and scope, faculty members, released for the project, were drawn from the various disciplines under special review for the year.

The other parallel effort was supporting faculty members to pursue advanced graduate study and research towards terminal degrees in their fields. Between 1969-1973, 25 faculty from member institutions were supported to pursue doctorate degree studies; 5 the masters degrees and 1 post-doctoral studies/research (See Table I). There were also fellowship awards to a total of 21 faculty to pursue graduate study during the summer.

TABLE I

Academic-Year Faculty Fellowship Awards, 1969-73

I.	Awards for Doctoral (Ph.D.) Studies	
	Field of Study	**Number of Awards**
	Humanities	12
	Social Sciences	7
	Life Sciences	6
		25
II.	Awards for Master's Degree Work	
	Humanities	3
	Social Sciences	1
	Life Sciences	1
		5
III.	Awards for Post-doctoral Studies	
	Social Sciences	1

Curriculum Development and Cultural Enrichment

The thrust of curriculum development, the central purpose of the entire project, was assisting each institution in the revision, development, and making innovation in its liberal arts curriculum. Special emphases were placed in general studies, as well as specialized courses. Through research, study and opportunities for consultations with those who had expertise in African and Afro-American Studies, institutional participants developed materials, course outlines, and methodologies that would more realistically reflect the curricular goals, purposes and needs of their institutions. The process entailed continuing consultations and guidance between project participants and their faculties and students in order to ensure that what they did and produced met with approval.

Media and material support were given the

project. A media specialist worked with participants in the preparation of instructional materials, compilation of bibliographies and preview of films, slides, recordings and teaching aids that related to the planned activities. Special workshops on material resources for African and Afro-American Studies were held for project participants and librarians of member institutions. Experts who conducted these workshops included Dorothy Porter, Walter Fisher and Jessie Carney Smith. As a result of these workshops, recommended books and materials, were acquired every year by the Consortium for all libraries of member institutions.

Curriculum development also fostered curriculum and cultural enrichment. Project sessions were held in rotation on Consortium campuses and were open to faculty, staff, and students of the six institutions. Each workshop, or seminar session featured formal presentations and/or exhibits to which all members of the institutional community and public were invited. The open sessions were followed by working sessions during which project participants met with resource persons to discuss specific issues, ideas and activities relating to curriculum reform and development. In that way, the project brought to campuses outstanding consultants, lecturers and artists for the purpose of curricular and cultural enrichment. This pattern of programming persisted throughout the duration of the project.

First Phase of the Project, 1969-70. As indicated earlier, the first phase of the project concentrated upon curriculum development and cultural enrichment in the areas of the Social Sciences and Literature. Activities featured in-service education for faculty participants toward improving their skills in curriculum building as well as enriching their cultural background, knowledge and information regarding African and Afro-American Studies. The outcomes were new core-courses and course guidelines; instructional methodology and materials; and resource bibliographies.

The content and methodology for curriculum development in the Social Sciences covered African and Afro-American history, anthropology, sociology and politics; Black Experience in Latin America, Pan-Africanism and urbanization. (See Table II). The eminent resource persons who provided consultative services included Clarence Bacote, Elsie Lewis, George Breathett, Earlie Thorpe, Benjamin Dennis, Dorothy Williams and Boniface Obichere.

TABLE II
Curricular Emphases in the Social Sciences, 1969-70

Curriculum Building in African and Afro-American Studies
African History, Anthropology and Sociology
Africans and Africa
Afro-Americans and Politics
Bibliographic Survey of African and Caribbean Resources
Black Cultural Values
Resources for Afro-American Studies in Social Sciences
The Black Experience in Latin America
Media and Methodology
Afro-Americans and Pan-Africanism
The Ghetto Game: Afro-Americans and Urbanization

In the area of English Literature, the curricular content and methodology emphasized the Literatures of Africa, Caribbean and Black America. The list of consultants included Leon Damas, Arthur Davis, Samuel Allen, Stephen Henderson and Charles Ray.

Second Phase of the Project, 1970-71. The focus of the 1970-71 phase of the project was the Arts and Humanities. Special curricular attention was given the humanities core; the performing arts — music, drama, theatre and dance; the visual arts — painting, drawing, sculpture, crafts; philosophy and religion; and languages. As in the first phase, workshops, seminars, exhibits, demonstrations and performances were held on all campuses and were open to institutional communities and neighborhood publics.

Efforts were made to develop interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and study of humanities. Contents and methodology emphasized the curriculum building in the humanities, the place of African and Afro-American arts in the humanities programs, Pan-Africanist approaches to the study of modern languages, etc. (See Table III).

TABLE III
Curricular Emphases in the Humanities, 1970-71

Curriculum Building in the Humanities
Place of African and Afro-American Arts in the Humanities
Curricular Programs in Philosophy and Religion
New Curricular Models in Humanities
Use of Media in Humanities
The Afro-Spanish Literature in the Caribbean
Incorporating African Materials in the Modern Language Curriculum
A Creative Expression of the Black Experience
The Structuring of a Humanities Core
New Directions in the Humanities
Humanities in the Space Age

In the performing Arts, emphasis was placed on Black expression and communication in Afro-American music, dances, drama and theatre; African music and dance, comprehensive musicianship, and clinics. (See Table IV).

TABLE IV

Curricular Emphases in the Performing Arts, 1970-71

The Black Artist: His Development, Heritage and Achievements
Black Expression and Communication
Religion as Related to Music
Black Drama: Commitment and Communication
Afro-American Dance
Black Plays
New Directions in the Performing Arts
Black Music: A Situation Report
Traditional Performance of African Music
African Music in the Curriculum of Black Studies
Drama and Black Experience
The New Role of the Black Musician
New Directions in Music Curriculum
Jazz Clinic
A Common Elements Approach to a Kaleidoscope of Music
Contents and Methodology for Courses in African and Afro-American Music
Comprehensive Musicianship

The curricular emphases in the visual arts featured traditional visual art forms of the Black world, history and uses of art, exhibits and bibliographic resources. (See Table V).

TABLE V

Curricular Emphases in the Visual Arts, 1970-71

Curriculum Building in the Visual Arts
Black Art History
African and Afro-American Art: Resources in Curriculum Development
Critical Approach to Study of African and Afro-American Art
Art Exhibits
New Solutions to Old Problems by Black Artists
Color and Motion in Visual Arts
Art Clinic
New Direction in Black Social Art
Traditional Visual Art Forms of the Black World

The resource persons for the year included: Mark Fax, T. J. Anderson, Halim El-Dabh, Donald Byrd, Margaret Harris, James Standifer and James Marquis in Music; John Biggers, James Lewis, Eugene Grigsby, Lois Jones Pierre-Noel, Lorraine Bolton and Barry Gaither in the visual arts; Scott Kennedy, and Floyd Gaffney in drama and theatre

arts; Naomi Garrett and Hortensia Sanchez-Boudy in Languages; and Archie Hargraves in Philosophy and Religion.

The Third Phase of the Project, 1971-72. The subject matter area of the Life Sciences was the focus of the 1971-72 phase of the African and Afro-American Studies Project. The program and activities emphasized contributions and considerations in the life sciences and society that relate to Africans and Afro-Americans. Of interest was the analysis of research that has been done to date about and by African peoples in the various areas of the life sciences with particular reference to the problems of evolution and race, genetics, human relationships, nutrition and disease. (See Table VI.)

TABLE VI

Curricular Emphases in the Life Sciences, 1971-72

The Life Sciences and the Black Experience
Teaching Methodology: Modular Approaches
Black Scientists in the Life Sciences
Evolution and Race: Social Implications for the Life Sciences
Effects of the Parameters of Life on Blacks
Ecology of Human Relationships
Genetics of Afro-Americans
Genetic Engineering and Afro-Americans
Diseases Prevalent in Black Communities: Etiology and Intervention
Sickle-Cell Anemia
Nutritional Problems of Black Americans
Current Issues and Opportunities in Life Sciences

The list of resource persons who served as seminar and workshop leaders, subject matter consultants and evaluators included Samuel Nabrit, David Ray, Samuel Massie, John Withers, William West, Henry Moses, Cecile Edwards, Dorothy Williams and Jacqueline Jackson.

Implementation of the Project 1972-73

The major program thrust of the 1972-73 phase of the African and Afro-American Studies Curriculum Project is the continuation and implementation of the curriculum development efforts of the preceeding three years. This phase provides opportunities for a synthesis and applicaton utilizing interdisciplinary approaches for the maintenance of existing level of curricular accomplishment, and creative activities of black people. The primary objective is to encourage and facilitate curriculum infusion with the work and contributions of black people in the social sciences,

humanities, and the life sciences. Consultative services have been provided the divisions of the cooperating institutions. Each division has developed programs, based on its institutional needs, for the purpose of reinforcing the knowledge, methodology and materials that were acquired and developed previously.

Many institutional activities have taken the form of seminars, workshops and symposia:

Art Seminars and Exhibits
Workshops in Drama, Music, and Dance
Seminar on African Religions
Interdisciplinary Science Symposium on the Black Family
Media and Materials Workshop
Developing Instructional Materials from Biological Abstracts
Seminars in Urban Affairs
Developing materials for Multi-Media Approach to the Black Experience
Writing of a general social science textbook, *Man and Society*
Symposium on Black Experience as Reflected in Standard Textbooks
Symposium on Sickle-Cell Anemia.

Additionally, implementation has stimulated the teaching of courses whose outlines were developed during the last three years. Changes have also been made in course descriptions in catalogs to reflect the utilization of materials and methodology that had been developed as a result of the project. Demonstrations in the performing arts have been given.

Support for faculty training enabled numerous faculty members from all institutions to attend professional workshops since September 1972. Part of this money has also been used to support workshops on campuses for faculty and students. Two faculty fellowships (worth $8,000) for advanced study were awarded to each institution for the support of their faculty members who are pursuing doctoral studies. Three (3) National Teaching Fellowships were also awarded to each participating institution. These have so far been used effectively. Some of the fellows have been used to release faculty members who are away on advanced studies. Others are being used in the divisions.

Books, materials, and journals for libraries, and audio-visual/instructional materials for media centers have been acquired through the aegis of the project. Librarians of these institutions have worked with divisional representatives on these acquisitions.

Part of the year's activity has to do with a critical appraisal of what has been done so far. The direction is that of assessing the current impact of the project on the total institutional curricula and taking steps to make the necessary changes. This concern is appropriately the focus of the Fourth Annual Invitational Workshop.

Dissemination of Project Outcomes

A major objective of the project was the dissemination of the results of the activities and outcomes of the project not only to the constituencies of the six participating institutions, but also to the funding agency and interested schools, colleges and universities throughout the nation. The dissemination procedure utilized included progress reports, bulletins, invitational workshops, and publication of curriculum and bibliographic reports.

Progress Reports. Periodic progress reports on project activities (workshops, seminars, exhibits, etc.), along with participant outputs, were issued and distributed widely on all consortium campuses. Special progress reports were also forwarded to the U. S. Office of Education.

Bulletins. Each year since 1969, bulletins on the project, listing the schedules of sessions, resource persons and the institutional participants were published and distributed on campuses and elsewhere to inform faculty, students and others of planned seminars, and workshops.

Invitational Workshops. Since Spring 1970, an invitational workshop on African and Afro-American Studies has been held to share the results of the project with educators and students from schools, colleges and universities around the country. These workshops provided opportunities for exchange of new knowledge, curricular approaches and materials for effective programs of African and Afro-American Studies. These workshops, on the average, involved more than three hundred participants. The foci of the workshop corresponded with the yearly subject matter emphases.

The First Invitational Workshop provided opportunities for exploring curricular approaches, from the Social Sciences and Literature, to African and Afro-American Studies. The proceedings of the workshop were compiled under the title *Curricular Approaches to African and Afro-American Studies.* Copies of the booklet have been distributed to all interested persons on consortium campuses and other institutions and agencies.

With a focus on "Curriculum Development in the Arts", the Second Invitational Workshop held in 1971 provided a forum for the sharing of the output and experience resulting from the project in the arts and humanities. The proceedings were published under the title, *Black Arts in Today's Curriculum.*

The Third Invitational Workshop resulted in the publications, *The Life Sciences and Society* and *Towards an Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum in African and Afro-American Studies.* Held in April, 1972, the workshop grappled with the issues and problems that had special relevance to the lives and condition of black people as verified in the life sciences.

With its focus on "The Impact of African and Afro-American Studies: Agenda for the Future," the Fourth Annual Invitational Workshop was directed toward assessing the current impact and the future prospects of these studies on curricula, educational institutions and society. The proceedings will be published.

Curriculum and Bibliographic Reports. Compilations of course descriptions, based on course outlines developed by project participants, and bibliographies have been made every year. These have been published and disseminated widely. *Proposed Courses of Study,* 1970 presents the work that was done in the Social Sciences and English Literature during 1969-70. Extensive bibliographies of materials in these areas were also included. Curricular patterns and bibliography in the Visual Arts were published in *Proposed Courses of Study in Visual Arts,* 1972.

The proceedings of a workshop on languages held in 1971 resulted in *Pan-Africanist Approach to Modern Language Study.* These included major presentations and bibliographies on how cultural and literary materials of excellence written by the Black people of French and Spanish expressions can be used to enrich the teaching of modern languages.

Annotated Selections from Biological Abstracts on Africans and Afro-Americans, 1972 presents reports on research in the areas of the life sciences that relate to the peoples of African descent. Other compilations on contemporary black scientists and selected bibliographies are well under way.

In addition to these booklets, numerous mimeographed bibliographic listings and guides in dance, music, history, theatre, arts, etc. had been made and distributed widely to the faculty and students of all participating institutions and to participants at invitational workshops.

Project Evaluation, 1969-1972

Internal Evaluation. Periodic internal evaluations were carried out each year to measure the effectiveness of the project and its impact on the participants, the institutions, and the Consortium. A project evaluation inventory was developed for this purpose. The resulting assessments served a corrective function in terms of project goals, scope and activities. Efforts were made to make changes in the interest of participating institutions. Problems encountered by project participants were taken up with their academic administrators. As a result, it became very clear that the extent to which an institution benefitted from the project was directly related to institutional support and participation. It was overwhelmingly confirmed that the project had improved the quality of faculty and curriculum.

External Evaluation. Every year, an external team of two experts in the field of African and Afro-American Studies, within the subject matter area of emphasis, was appointed to appraise the output of the project participants. The team made several visitations to Consortium campuses, met with deans, faculty and students to assess the effectiveness of the project and the relationship of what was being done to institutional needs and purposes. Evaluation reports on these assessments as well as suggestions for improvements and new approaches were submitted by the team following each visitation. These reports were distributed widely on campuses and both project participants and their institutional committees take steps to study and implement the directives from the reports. The list of evaluators of the project included John Biggers, Mark Fax, Harold Finley, Walter Fisher, Richard Long, Lafayette Frederick and Roy Hunter.

On the whole, all evaluation reports were generally supportive and instructive. In part these were indicative of the special abilities of evaluators and the bouying enthusiasm and industry of project participants. Expressions such as the following were characteristics of the reports:

> The African and Afro-American Studies Curriculum Project of the Six Institutions' Consortium is providing the stimulation and support for a body of curriculum development activities of high merit. It provides the mechanism for released time for faculty in the participating institutions to plan and initiate new black programs and to revise and rehabilitate old programs. Competent faculty craftsmen are shaping viable approaches to African and Afro-American Studies instruction, all very sensibly oriented to local needs and objectives, and to peculiar institutional characteristics. 1969-70.

The great worth of the African and Afro-American Studies Curriculum Project is meaningful to the degree that it awakens institutional policy to the commitment of a renewal of humanism and creativity in the lives of the teachers, students, and community. 1970-71

We found clear evidence that the thrusts and purposes of the program in life sciences were being met in commendable fashion at all six of the participating institutions. The Project directors have worked and were still working with great enthusiasm; they had and still have the full support of their faculty colleagues, the science oriented and non-science oriented students, and the immediate communities served by the institutions. Also, they have the full support of the administrative officers in the six colleges. The beneficial impact of the Consortium on curriculum, inter-faculty communications and interinstitutional cooperation, and on students' image of success was unmistakable and clear. The contributions from the Resource Persons were well received by large audiences; they constructively motivated their audiences, and brought new ideas and new knowledge to the various campuses. 1971-72

Unfinished Business

Despite the healthy progress that the member institutions have made and the invaluable gains that have been theirs as a result of the project, there is still a great deal of unfinished business. One of these, undoubtedly, is that of translating knowledge, gained so far, into action. Implementation of the methodology and materials arising from the project must continue in order to provide a curriculum that not only **touches** the contemporary lives and situations of their students, but also one that **relates** to their heritage and **provides** the variety and stimulation necessary for their formative experiences and growth. To this end, vigorous effort must be made to promote the interdisciplinary approaches in African and Afro-American Studies that have already been developed on the various campuses.

One important phase of these studies must concern work with the immediate neighborhoods of the institutions. Knowledge and humanistic experiences must be shared with our kith and kin in communities surrounding our colleges and universities. The community outreach program must include studies of community needs and issues. Current extra-mural field work activities must be expanded to accommodate the various areas of life education that have so far been untouched. The major goal must be one of developing a mastery in these areas as well as affecting the lives of all institutional neighbors.

There is a need to improve and increase acquisitions of materials for effective programs in African and Afro-American Studies. Already

special collections, such as the "Black Women's Collections" at Bennett College must be increased so that these institutions can truly serve as depository of the most inclusive material for research. An established Institute or Center for African and Afro-American Studies at one of these institutions will serve as a clearinghouse for research, dissemination of knowledge and materials, and a reference center for instructional development and enrichment. Such an Institute will help to up-date curricular studies and materials, coordinate and chart the course for research and re-search of matters of concern to peoples of African descent. To dig up, search, analyze and disseminate buried facts about the black man, will constitute an important mission of the Institute.

Summing Up

While the accomplishments of the Six Institutions' Consortium have been significant, much remains to be done if the educational process is to reflect the composite activity and creativity of the total human race. It is hoped, therefore, that African and Afro-American Studies will serve as a context out of which a wholesome curriculum will blossom, if we deliberately work for it. Such a prospect will give more fulfillment within and without the institution of higher learning. This can be done by these six institutions if they are **willing** and **decided** to continue to work together. The Consortium approach will remain a viable process of educational service only as it is cultivated and used by member institutions to maximize the opportunities that interinstitutional cooperation offers.